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Mission Statement: To make Missouri the best place to live, work, vacation and conduct business.

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Department of Economic Development

Holden appoints Simmons to direct statewide economic development efforts

On December 11, Gov. Bob Holden named Public Service Commissioner Kelvin Simmons as the new Director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development. Simmons replaces Joe Driskill, who resigned effective January 1, 2004 after ten years as the director.

I am excited about the opportunity Governor Holden has given me to serve as director of the Department of Economic Development. I can think of no other public service job that is as important right now than this one. It is a tremendous responsibility because this department works with partners across the state to help secure a prosperous future for Missouri's families, businesses and communities. As the new director I intend to build on these partnerships that already exist to ensure we have new opportunities to retain and create jobs.

In appointing me to be the new director of DED, Governor Holden made it clear that I was chosen to build upon the state's recent surge in jobs and take economic development in Missouri in an exciting new direction. He made it very clear that my top priority was to recommend and implement strategies to create and retain jobs and further expedite our economic recovery.

I am anxious to meet the Governor's challenge and believe my background will enable me to work with DED staff, members of the General Assembly, other state agencies, businesses and our many partners around the state to achieve sustained economic growth in all parts of Missouri.

I believe my background has prepared me for this role. I am a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia with degrees in communications and inter-disciplinary studies; I have an Executive MBA from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. I have studied business and financial markets internationally and engaged in missions of understanding in Hong Kong, Beijing, South Africa, Sweden, Finland and Cuba and have made presentations in

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Driskill announces resignation from DED after decade of service

State Economic Development Director Joe Driskill resigned from his office January 1 to become executive director of the Missouri Technology Corporation.

Driskill had been director of the Department of Economic Development since April 1993 and was the longest serving member of Governor Holden's Cabinet. He was named director by the late Governor Mel Carnahan and served as a part of

Governor Holden's administration since 2001.

"After finishing my 10th year in this position, I advised Governor Holden late last summer that I had decided it was time for me to pursue other career opportunities. I made the Governor aware of my desire so that he would have time to find a replacement and ensure a smooth transition," Driskill said. "I am honored to have

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State aids community development groups across Missouri

The Missouri Department of Economic Development has awarded \$677,721 in grants to assist both urban and rural communities in housing, community and economic development activities.

The Community Development Corporation (CDC) Grant Program is designed to fund projects that encourage community organizations to work together to strategically redevelop economically depressed areas. A CDC is a community-based organization governed by a local board that uses its resources to attract capital, develop or rehabilitate low-income housing and increase business development and job opportunities for its residents.

The CDCs receiving state grants for Fiscal Year 2004 include programs for job mentoring, affordable housing, job training and placement, transitional services, small business counseling and incubation services for businesses. The grant awards were based on the determination of a CDC's ability to demonstrate resourcefulness in their development efforts, such as support from outside sources, and to produce measurable outcomes for their communities and neighborhoods.

The following community-based organizations received 2004 CDC grants:

Blue Hills Home Corporation, Kansas City, \$75,000
 Hispanic Economic Development Corporation, Kansas City, \$75,000
 Butler County Community Resource Council, Poplar Bluff, \$37,907
 EOC Community Action Agency, St. Joseph, \$75,000
 Beyond Housing Inc./Neighborhood Housing Services, St. Louis, \$64,000
 CIBC Westend Academy, St. Louis, \$68,800
 Center for Women in Transition, St. Louis, \$70,274
 Grace Hill Neighborhood Housing Services, St. Louis, \$70,500
 Hi-Tech Charities, St. Louis, \$75,000
 Human Development Corporation, St. Louis, \$66,240

STATE OF EMPLOYMENT

Missouri labor market conditions improved further in November as the state's unemployment rate fell another three-tenths of a point to 5.0 percent. The latest decrease further widens the gap between unemployment rates in Missouri and the nation, which reported a rate of 5.9 percent.

November's decrease from the revised October rate is the largest monthly drop since the unemployment rate peaked at 5.7 percent in June and the rate is half a percentage point lower than it was a year ago (5.6 percent). About 149,400 Missourians were estimated to have been jobless in November, 16,700 fewer than were reported a year ago.

Missouri's unadjusted unemployment rate also decreased, falling by two-tenths of a point to 4.7 percent, down from 4.9 in October and 5.7 in November 2002.

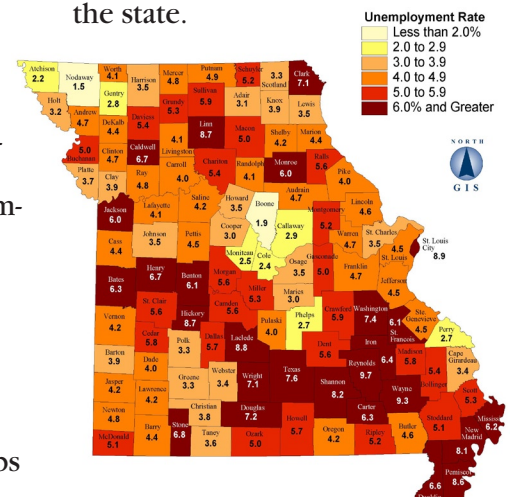
The state's unadjusted rate is also nine-tenths of a percentage point lower than the nation's unadjusted unemployment rate, which held steady at 5.6 percent in November.

Non-farm payroll employment was little changed over the month. Government employment dipped by 2,700 jobs on a seasonally adjusted basis, while private sector employment was up by 1,800 jobs. A number of private industry groups

reported higher employment. The largest gain was 2,100 in educational and health services, followed by an increase of 1,200 in financial activities. Natural resources and mining; construction; manufacturing; and trade, transportation and utilities reported small increases. Employment decreased slightly in information, leisure and hospitality, professional and business services, and other services.

Not seasonally adjusted data show that the largest part of the decrease in government was in state government, but federal and local governments also reported lower employment.

Compared to November 2002 employment is up by 5,000 jobs. Employment gains are now becoming more widespread throughout the state.



CALENDAR

January 7	92nd General Assembly 2nd Regular Session Convenes
January 19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day State Offices Closed
January 21	State of the State Address
February 11	Missouri Arts Awards Capitol Rotunda
February 12	Lincoln Day State Offices Closed
February 16	President's Day State Offices Closed
May 7	Truman Day (observed) State Offices Closed
May 19-21	Governor's Business Development Conference Lake Ozark

Governor, DED host Fifth Annual International Student Day

More than 200 international students from 19 universities and colleges from across the state took part in the Fifth Annual Governor's International Student Day on December 2 in Jefferson City. Governor Bob Holden and the Department of Economic Development hosted the event.

The annual event provided international students with the opportunity to network and celebrate their diversity. Most of the day's activities took place in the State Capitol. Gov. Holden addressed the students in the House of Representatives chamber and presented certificates to three outstanding students.

The Governor recognized the three international students for their contributions to their communities and their universities. They are: Myriam Gharbi-Palmer, Missouri Southern State University, Joplin; Sebastian Gonzales, Hannibal LaGrange College, Hannibal; and Ioulia Rassaloulouva, Park University, Parkville. The three honorees were chosen by a panel of judges and met specific criteria related to achievements, activities and academics.

Gharbi-Palmer, from France, is pursuing a teaching degree and is being recognized for helping her fellow international students by serving as an e-mail contact and by assisting

them with various tax treaties and forms. Gonzales, from Argentina, is majoring in business administration. His special achievements include developing new software for the campus computer services, teaching English to other international students and serving as president of the International Student club on campus. Rassoulova, from Russia, is working on a degree in public administration. She is involved in many organizations and was selected as one of three students serving as an intern with the Office of the City Manager for the city

of Kansas City.

In addition, students toured the Capitol, enjoyed a buffet luncheon at Capitol Plaza Hotel and gained some helpful advice at a seminar regarding nonresident alien taxation.

The event was sponsored by Barnes-Jewish Hospital International Healthcare Services, Burns & McDonnell, DST Systems Inc., the Hawthorn Foundation, Orscheln, Par-Way Tryson Company, Wal-Mart of Jefferson City and International Blends Coffee Service.



(From left to right) Myriam Gharbi-Palmer, Sebastian Gonzales, and Ioulia Rassaloulouva were recognized for their outstanding accomplishments during International Student Day.

Holden appoints Simmons as next director *continued*

France and Jamaica.

Before accepting this job I had served as a member and chairman of the Public Service Commission since June of 2000. I also served as a member of the Kansas City Council for nearly four years, as director of constituent services for Governor Mel Carnahan, and as state director for Equal Employment Opportunity in the Office of Administration. I believe the experience and knowledge I have gained in these previous positions will enable me to be successful as director of DED. My chosen career is public service; I am proud of that choice and I am anxious to serve in this new role.

In this role my total focus is jobs. Everything we do is in some way related to jobs. Good jobs are essential to the future of our state. Governor Holden knows this. I know this. We all know this. We also know that to be competitive in today's global, knowledge-based economy we must have a highly skilled workforce. That is why education is so important. That is why the Governor has been fighting for additional funding for education. The fact is: Jobs and Education are inseparable. We simply will not have quality jobs unless we have quality education at all levels and in all parts of our state.

Over the next few months, I plan to spend a great deal of time visiting with business and community leaders across Missouri to hear what you have to say and how our department can better serve your needs. That input is very important to me.

I believe Missouri has a strong business climate that is sparking growth, that our economy is fundamentally solid, and that we have unlimited opportunities. But to take advantage of those opportunities we must work together. I look forward to working with all Missourians over the next few years to help secure a bright future for our families, businesses and communities.

Driskill announces resignation *continued*

had the opportunity to serve as part of Governor Holden's administration but I think I can accomplish more for our state in another role.

"I have considered several job opportunities over the past few months, but I am especially pleased to become the first executive director of the Missouri Technology Corporation. My new role will allow me to continue my interest in job growth

Notable accomplishments during Driskill's tenure:

- Played a key role in efforts to retain the Ford Hazelwood Assembly Plant in St. Louis and the American Airlines Overhaul Base in Kansas City.
- Worked to attract or expand hundreds of companies and thousands of Missouri jobs in all parts of Missouri such as: MasterCard International, Pfizer and Citi Mortgage in the St. Louis area; the Ford Claycomo Assembly Plant and Harley Davidson in Kansas City; Bank One in Springfield; Procter and Gamble, Briggs and Stratton and Arvin-Meritor in Southeast Missouri; Phoenix Scientific and Boehringer Ingelheim in Northwest Missouri; General Mills in Northeast Missouri; and the location of major distribution centers for Wal-Mart and Dollar General Stores around the state.
- Helped consolidate the state's many employment and job training services into one agency (Division of Workforce Development) to provide more streamlined services to workers and employers, making Missouri one of only a few states with workforce and economic development in the same department.
- Wrote and implemented the state's first strategic plan for economic development.
- Implemented a "targeted industry" strategy to help develop company and job opportunities in the emerging industry clusters-Plant and Life Sciences; Advanced Manufacturing; and Information Technology.
- Administered millions of dollars in federal disaster aid money to assist flood victims of the 1993 and 1995 floods. The department's response plan was adopted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as a model for other states to follow.
- Helped fund major urban redevelopment projects in partnership with the Missouri Development Finance Board, such as Union Station and the Center for Performing Arts in Kansas City; and the Convention Center Hotel, Cupples Station, and the CORTEX Plan in St. Louis; the Jordan Valley Park in Springfield; and the Branson Convention Center.
- Led state negotiations with the St. Louis Cardinals to keep the team in Missouri and help bring about a new stadium and Ballpark Village with no public funding for the ballpark.
- Established a regional approach to economic development by forming regional teams to improve access to state development services.
- Improved partnerships between business and education with programs like the Research Alliance of Missouri where research directors of state universities are collaborating to develop and coordinate research efforts.



and economic success for Missouri, but I will be able to concentrate more on helping Missouri be competitive in the new, knowledge-based economy."

The Missouri Technology Corporation is a private, not-for-profit corporation chartered by state law and governed by a 15 member board. Its purpose is to promote the competitiveness of businesses by helping to increase research and development at Missouri universities, streamline the process of transferring and commercializing new ideas, and promote business access to cutting-edge technologies that will promote innovation and growth.

During Driskill's tenure at the Department of Economic Development, Missouri experienced sustained growth in its economy. During the past decade, the number of jobs in Missouri increased by 265,000 (11 percent), the number of businesses increased by 29,931 (16 percent), and the per capita income of Missourians climbed by 43 percent.

Over the past decade, the Gross State Product grew by more than \$40 billion (31 percent), and exports by Missouri companies increased by \$1 billion (19 percent).

"I am very proud of the growth of jobs, businesses and income that has occurred in our state the past 10 years," said Driskill. "This growth is a reflection on Missouri's strong business climate, the education and skills of our workers, and the quality of life in our communities. I believe our department has had a positive impact on making Missouri a better place to live, work and do business.

"I am especially pleased with the way the excellent employees of our department have been able to work with local and regional development partners across the state to help create and retain jobs that are key to the continued economic security of Missouri's families."

Missouri's economy shows employment strength

In an ongoing series of periodic economic conditions reports provided by the Missouri Department of Economic Development, Missouri's economy is showing strong signs of recovery from the national recession, with a variety of indicators, including employment, showing strength.

The latest report, issued in December by the department's Economic Research and Information Center, indicates that 2003 has been a remarkable year for the growth of jobs in Missouri and our recovery from the national recession appears to be accelerating.

For much of 2003, Missouri was bucking the national trend of job losses. Between January and October, national employment declined by 220,000 while Missouri employment is up by 18,000. Missouri ranks in the top third of the nation in job growth during 2003.

When compared to neighboring states, Missouri is doing quite well. Of the eight states that border Missouri, only Nebraska has had a greater percentage increase in employment than Missouri so far this year. Four have had a decline, including Oklahoma, Arkansas, Illinois and Kentucky.

Comparing November 2002 to November 2003 figures, employment has increased by 5,000 in the state – an indication of the job creation that has occurred during the year. As a comparison, the time between January 2002 and January 2003 showed a drop of 70,000 jobs.

One part of the conditions report that has caused some concern is the fact that taxable sales continue to show little or no growth over the previous year. For 10 consecutive quarters, there has been negative growth in taxable sales when adjusted for inflation and seasonal factors. However, the real year-to-year growth during the 3rd quarter

of this year stood at -0.13 percent, a negligible decline compared to the previous nine quarters.

Missouri Department of Revenue Director Carol Fischer, who was present at the economic conditions briefing, pointed out that while Missouri is seeing positive economic indicators, it takes some time for tax collections to reflect that positive news.

A copy of the full Economic Conditions report can be downloaded at www.missouridevelopment.org

Highlights of Missouri's Economic Conditions: DECEMBER 2003

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: Missouri's unemployment rate has been consistently below the national average during this recession, in most cases by a half percent or greater. The state unemployment rate dropped from 5.2 percent in October to 5.0 percent in November. The November unemployment rate is nine-tenths below the national rate.

PERSONAL INCOME: This is a broad measure of economic activity and data for 2002 shows that Missouri's total personal income and per capita personal income grew at a greater rate than the rest of the nation. Figures for this year are not yet available, however, the early indications are that the trend has continued.

BUSINESS GROWTH: Missouri has a record number of businesses. This year an average of 1,200 new businesses have been formed each month; new businesses lead to new jobs. Through the second quarter of this year, Missouri has added about 700 net new businesses and seems to be on pace to meet or exceed last year's increase.

MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT HAS STABILIZED: Improvement in the manufacturing sector continues to be a bright spot on Missouri's road to recovery. Missouri has lost manufacturing jobs over the past 10 months, but the state's loss of 0.5 percent ranks among the 12 best states in manufacturing employment. The Creighton University Purchasing Managers Index of manufacturing, has been above the expansionary rate of 50 for 20 months.

Governor Holden announces comprehensive JOBS NOW plan

Recently Governor Holden unveiled his Jobs Now Plan, which is a comprehensive effort to build on the momentum of Missouri's recovering economy.

This plan, which will be a key part of the Governor's 2004 agenda, will create jobs through targeted investment in critical infrastructure, help stimulate the growth of our targeted industries like the plant and life sciences, and provide increased funding to help ensure a highly skilled workforce in the state.

"Nothing is more important to the future of Missouri's families, businesses and communities than jobs," Holden said. "Without good jobs our state will not have the kind of sustained economic growth we need to ensure a bright future for all of our citizens in all parts of the state.

"During the past year we have seen some positive developments in our fight for jobs here in Missouri," Holden said. "Despite a national trend of job losses, Missouri's trend has been toward job growth."

The Governor pointed out that Missouri ranks among the top third of states for job growth so far this year and that of the eight states that border Missouri, only Nebraska has had a greater percentage increase in employment than Missouri. Four states, Illinois, Kentucky, Arkansas and Oklahoma have had a decline.

"Through all of 2003 we have seen a trend toward economic growth. Missouri's economy is fundamentally strong, we have a strong business climate, and new businesses are starting and jobs are being created," Holden said. "And while we continue to be optimistic, we must take steps to sustain and build on this economic momentum; we must do more to create jobs now."

Because of the state's tight financial condition, this plan has a very important component: it is revenue neutral. It redirects existing revenues by repealing three outdated and inefficient tax credit programs - Research and Development, Transportation Development, and Business Facilities. Savings from these would provide \$12-15 million a year that could be used to underwrite between \$150-200 million in bonds, issued by the Missouri Development Finance Board.

This money would go into a "Missouri Jobs Fund" that would provide immediate grants and loans to public bodies that could be used right away for infrastructure development - water and sewer systems, roads, bridges, broadband, rail spurs, airports, university wet labs and equipment and many other things. Sixty percent of the fund would be used for infrastructure grants and loans; 20 percent would be used to leverage previously untapped federal dollars; and 20 percent would be used for targeted infrastructure investments with a high probability of creating jobs for the future in industries such as the plant and life sciences.

The plan also will enhance and expand the Enterprise Zone tax credit program for need-based awards aimed at target industries and cluster development.



NEWSBRIEFS

State loan aids start up of wood plastic composite manufacturer

The Missouri Department of Economic Development approved a request from Vernon County in November on behalf of Green Forest Engineered Products, L.L.C. for a \$240,000 Action Fund Loan. The loan is made through the Community Development Block Grant program and will be used for working capital to aid the start up of the wood plastic composite manufacturer in Nevada.

The new company will invest more than \$900,000 and create 34 new jobs.

Green Forest Engineered Products will manufacture engineered wood products using a wood plastic composite extrusion process. The products will be used in the construction, infrastructure development, transportation equipment and industrial/consumer industries.

Earthworks to expand in St. Genevieve County

A state grant will aid in the expansion of Earthworks Inc., located in St. Genevieve County, the creation of 28 new jobs and an \$845,000 investment.

The Missouri Department of Economic Development has awarded a \$267,490 Industrial Infrastructure Grant through the Community Development Block Grant program to Ste. Genevieve County on behalf of the local County Special Road District. The grant will help make street improvements that are required for the business expansion.

The improvements include improvements to Eisenbeis Bottom Road. The road is inadequate, and could not withstand the additional truck traffic that will be created by the expansion and additional volume of business.

Earthworks workers fabricate natural stone veneers and cut stone for residential and commercial markets. Earthworks opened the Ste. Genevieve County plant in 1997.

Produce distributor relocates to Kansas City, creates 52 new jobs

Loffredo Fresh Produce Co. officials plan to relocate their Southern Regional Distribution Center from Lenexa, Kansas to a facility at 750 Wyoming in Kansas City, Missouri. The move will result in 52 new Missouri-based jobs and an investment of \$1.8 million.

The Department of Economic Development has approved up to \$250,000 in development tax credits, as requested by the Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City. The tax credits will help offset a donation made to the corporation by Loffredo, and will leverage the company's expansion. The donation was made in the form of equipment, which will be leased back to Loffredo to equip the new location.

Loffredo supplies fresh produce to hotels and restaurants. The distribution center in Kansas City will be used to receive, store and distribute to customers throughout western Missouri, Kansas, and eventually to St. Louis and Tulsa.

Brookstone expands in Mexico

The Missouri Department of Economic Development approved up to \$100,000 in development tax credits, as requested by the Mexico Chamber of Commerce, in November. The tax credits will help offset a donation made to the Chamber by Brookstone Inc., and will leverage the company's expansion. The donation was made in the form of equipment, which will be leased back to the company.

Due to distribution requirements, Brookstone officials determined that it was necessary to either expand its Mexico facility or build a new facility elsewhere. The development tax credits will enable the expansion, which includes a \$1.8 million private investment and 40 new jobs.

Brookstone is a nationwide specialty retailer, which offers unique products to customers via retail stores, catalogs

and the Internet. Brookstone's distribution center in Mexico currently employs about 35.

Midwest Motorcycle Supply to expand in Jefferson County

The Missouri Department of Economic Development approved a \$355,000 industrial infrastructure grant for the city of Pevely through the department's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The funds will be used to make sewer improvements necessary to facilitate the multi-million dollar expansion of Midwest Motorcycle Supply Distributors Corp.

Midwest Motorcycle is expanding to Pevely from the City of Arnold. Company sales have caused it to outgrow its current facility in Arnold and an expansion at that site is not possible.

Founded in St. Louis in 1971, Midwest Motorcycle Supply Distributors Corp. is a wholesale distributor of aftermarket supplies and accessories for American-made motorcycles. The company carries over 15,000 line items and sells them to over 7,000 dealers worldwide.

State tax credits awarded for clean up of St. Louis site

The Missouri Department of Economic Development has approved up to \$2.4 million in remediation tax credits through the Brownfield Redevelopment Program for the Paul Brown Building at 818 Olive Street in St. Louis. The building, which is largely empty, will be converted into 222 apartments, 130 parking spaces and 20,777 square feet of retail space.

The historic building is a 17-story former office building located at the corner of 9th and Olive. The developer plans to restore the lobby to its original historic condition and retain other historic elements. The site first requires clean up due to the presence of lead-based paint and asbestos.

NEWSBRIEFS

State assistance supports Solae's expansion in St. Louis

State tax credits will offset costs involved in the expansion of Solae in the city of St. Louis. The soy processing, research and development company is investing \$25 million to consolidate operations in the St. Louis region. The expansion will result in the retention of 375 jobs and the creation of eight new jobs in the next two years.

In August, Solae L.L.C. announced its decision to retain its corporate headquarters in the City of St. Louis, rather than moving to Indiana or Illinois. As a result, the company will merge its acquired research, development and marketing operations currently located in Fort Wayne, Ind., with its research operation on the Nestle campus in St. Louis.

In order to retain these high-wage paying jobs and help the company to expand for future growth and prosperity, state and local officials offered a comprehensive incentives package. The Missouri Department of Economic Development approved up to \$2 million in Development Tax Credits for the St. Louis Local Development Company to offset a \$4 million donation the not-for-profit agency will receive from Solae. The donation, which will be made in the form of equipment, will be leased back to the company for the next five years.

The company is also eligible for more than \$2.2 million in state Enterprise Zone Program benefits, depending upon the new investment and job creation.

Solae, which is an alliance between DuPont De NeMours & Company and Bunge Limited, brings nutritious soy-foods to the marketplace and invests in fundamental research to understand the health benefits of soy protein. The company employs nearly 3,000 employees worldwide and has manufacturing operations in four major regions and six technical centers around the world.

City of Mexico enterprise zone expansion approved

The Missouri Department of Economic Development approved the expansion of an enterprise zone in the city of Mexico in December, which will facilitate the location of a new business, leading to 100 new jobs and \$3 million in investment.

The expansion is the direct result of the proposed location of Bentley Industries LLC, in the eastern part of Mexico. Bentley, a pontoon boat manufacturer, will move into the city's speculative building, which will now be located in the enterprise zone. The expansion of the enterprise zone will also allow the city to use the program to market the AP Green and Nexans vacant facilities, and include about 527 acres of developable land at three separate additional sites.

The Mexico enterprise zone was initially designated on Oct. 27, 1993. This is the second such expansion of this enterprise zone. Both expansions were made possible by legislation that went into effect in August 1994.

State aids downtown improvements in Louisiana

The city of Louisiana received approval in November for a state grant that will help revitalize its central business district, thus stimulating new economic opportunities in the future.

The Missouri Department of Economic Development approved a \$203,300 downtown revitalization grant for the city of Louisiana through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The city will use these funds to make infrastructure improvements in its downtown district.

The infrastructure improvements are made possible through a combination of the CDBG grant, in-kind funds from the city and other private funds.

The project will include the removal and replacement of deteriorated side-

walks, curbs, and gutters, and the installation of four new historic lights along historic Georgia Street from the corner of Main Street to Fourth Street. New sewer and storm sewer pipes and water main and 18 new service connections also will be installed, replacing the city's aged sewer and water lines.

St. James receives state help to improve downtown

The Missouri Department of Economic Development awarded a \$300,000 downtown revitalization grant through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to St. James, located in Phelps County, in November. The St. James Community Development Corporation is a sub-applicant on the project.

Revitalization plans call for the replacement of sidewalks, construction of new sidewalks where none exist, installation of vintage-era streetlights, and improvements to the storm water collection system to prevent flooding. Most of the revitalization efforts will take place along North Jefferson (Highway 68), which is the main entrance to the downtown area.

MISSOURI ENTERPRISE

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